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THE CANADIAN PRESS

## OVERTIME NINJAS

Oilers continue turnaround with 3-2 win over Bruins

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## In 30 days, 11 delays

### METRO LINE

**Latest update is that there will be plenty more updates**



**Tim Querengesser**  
Metro | Edmonton

A three-page report set to be discussed at city council Tuesday will not be fun reading, as it details 11 service delays in the last month alone for the still gaffe-plagued, \$700-million Metro Line LRT.

Two of the 11 faults in November resulted in "significant passenger delays," according to the report prepared by Transportation Services.

One of the delays saw a bus dispatched to ferry passengers while another resulted in passengers stranded on an LRT train between 15-30 minutes, according

to a report.

Many of the delays are being caused by software bugs in the Thales signals-control system that has shut down and even requires reboots, said Wayne Mandryk, LRT design and construction manager.

The system is only being used partially while train conductors drive at 25 km/h and use "line of sight" navigation on what is essentially a 3.3-kilometre spur line, while Thales figures out the bugs.

The delay that saw buses sent to get passengers to their destinations lasted two hours, Mandryk added.

"In a new system you'd expect some bugs," he said. "I would say we're experiencing more than we'd like to right now. Obviously we don't want to disrupt service."

Mandryk said New York-based Rail Safety Consulting is both auditing the safety of the system and addressing problems as they find them.

10

City's average number of complaints about delays or problems on the Metro Line per day, according to the report

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CFL

## Maas to head Esks

When Jason Maas was offered the position of head coach of the Grey Cup champion Edmonton Eskimos there was no hesitation whatsoever before he said yes.

The former Eskimo quarterback was introduced Monday as the team's new head coach, replacing Chris Jones who left to become vice-president of football operations, general manager and head coach of the Saskatchewan Roughriders.

Maas, with three Grey Cup rings to his credit — two while playing for Edmonton — said the opportunity was simply too good to pass up.

"I'm thrilled, I'm very passionate about the city and I'm glad to be back," Maas told a news conference in the Eskimos dressing room. "My goal was always at some point to come back to Edmonton. This is always where I wanted to end up."

Even he admitted, however,

he didn't expect it to happen so quickly. He's only been coaching three years since retiring in 2011. He was quarterbacks and receivers coach for the Toronto Argonauts from 2012-14 and this past season was offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach with the Ottawa Redblacks, who lost the Grey Cup to Edmonton.

Maas said he will be making announcements in January on assistant coaches.

**"I understand the expectations of Edmonton."**

Jason Maas

Still to be worked out between the Eskimos and the Redblacks is the issue of compensation. Traditionally CFL

teams have not asked for compensation when coaches leave for better opportunities but Ottawa has asked. Ed Hervey, who did not ask for compensation from Saskatchewan when Jones left, said he had no comment to make on the situation.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Three of these little guys were welcomed Monday at the city's popular wildlife park. They will be on display until spring when they are expected to participate in the species' breeding effort. ANDREA ROSS/METRO

## Edmonton Valley zoo debuts red panda cubs

### ANIMAL CARE

**Tango, Willow and Kola doing 'really well': Team leader**



**Andrea Ross**  
Metro | Edmonton

Three red panda babies made their official public debut at the Edmonton Valley Zoo Monday. Their noses dusted in fresh

snow, six-month old twins Willow and Kola took turns slowly climbing a tree house in their enclosure Monday afternoon as their mother, Pip, watched close by.

The male and female twins were born on Aug. 23. Another male panda, Tango, was born on July 30 to mother Rina. The zoo's male red panda, Kalden, fathered all three babies.

The new arrivals double the zoo's current red panda population.

"They're doing really, really well," Valley Zoo animal care

team leader Wade Krasnow said.

"Just to see them from the tiny little babies they were to right now, the little miniature-looking pandas running around the yard, it's just fantastic to see the whole progress."

The arrivals came as no surprise, Krasnow said, because zoo staff had noticed one of the mothers gaining weight — they just weren't sure how many babies to expect until their birth.

The zoo owns 14 of the red pandas in North America, Krasnow said.

The babies will be sent to

### + SPECIES FACTS

Red pandas are an endangered species native to Asia. There are less than 10,000 adults left in the wild, and the Valley Zoo is part of a worldwide conservation effort for the species.

other zoos in Canada and the United States in the spring to eventually participate in the species' breeding effort, he added.

They'll be on display at the zoo until then.



Ed Hervey, general manager of the Edmonton Eskimos Football Club, left, announces the hire of Jason Maas, right, as head coach on Monday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Isis Clothing co-owner Wendy Sims did not want to show her face in this photo that displays her store signs for fear of further harassment. ANDREA ROSS/METRO

# Isis Clothing Co. changing name

## BUSINESS

## Store target of hate mail over confusion with terror group



**Andrea Ross**  
Metro | Edmonton

The owner of a west Edmonton women's clothing store is changing the shop's name next month over a barrage of threatening phone calls and emails.

Isis Clothing Co. is named after an Egyptian goddess revered for protection and motherhood, store owner Colleen Sims said.

But some in Edmonton are confusing the store's name with the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria group, which has the acronym ISIS.

After the shootings in Paris

last month were linked to the extremists, Sims said she received around 20 disturbing emails over two days.

The emails haven't stopped, she said, adding that one man came into the store just to intimidate her and her staff, and others stop by just to photograph their storefront sign.

"You get a lot of emails from people saying nasty things like, 'You should change your name; why are you being so stupid,'" Sims said.

"Mostly men, a few women, have left nasty things on our voice mail. Every morning we come in and there's a couple emails."

Sims said she hasn't called the police about the harassment, and no physical damage has been done to the store she opened 10 years ago. But

she sees changing the store's name as important to its future success.

She hasn't settled on a new name yet but knows the move will cost the small business

thousands — \$5,000 just to change the storefront sign, Sims said.

"We're just saving enough money to be able to do it," she said. "If we had tons of money, we'd

probably be changing it overnight."

Sims said her longtime customers are supportive and understanding of the rebrand.

Still, it's an unfortunate — and costly — move for her business, she said.

"You spend 10 years building your name and now have to start all over again," Sims said.

"We need something that will never come back on us."

66

**You spend 10 years building your name and now have to start all over again.**

Colleen Sims

## POISONING

## Carbon monoxide believed to have sent five to hospital

Five people were taken to hospital after a suspected carbon-monoxide poisoning incident in an Edmonton home Sunday.

Edmonton Fire Rescue Services spokeswoman Jill McKenzie said crews were

called to a house near 37A Avenue and 23rd Street on Sunday just after 4 p.m.

Five patients were treated by EMS and taken to hospital, she said. McKenzie could not comment on their well-being Monday.

Alberta Health Services, ATCO Gas and the Edmon-

ton Police Service were also on scene investigating the incident, she said.

ATCO confirmed Monday they were on scene to inspect any natural-gas-burning appliances at the home but said those did not appear to be the cause of the poisoning. METRO



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## CULTURE

# Muslim community weaves its long history

**Sanam Islam**  
For Metro | Edmonton

For the last four months, members of a local youth group have been diligently weaving a prayer rug to showcase the deep history of Edmonton's Muslim community.

Now, the four women who've been weaving — most with little prior experience — have only a small amount of embroidery left to complete.

"We were all in unfamiliar territory but we were all able to navigate it together," says Rachel Pereira of The Green Room, which spearheaded the project. "And now to see the rug almost completed — the culmination of all that work — it's really gratifying."

In December 2014, the Edmonton Heritage Council gave the group a \$13,500 grant.

The Green Room's idea was to localize an international concept, producing a Muslim prayer rug

that represented both the people who made it and the location where it was made.

"Land is really what bridges us all," Pereira says.

The prayer rug's design reflects this. Its background depicts the Alberta landscape, while embroidered motifs represent the Syrian and Lebanese heritage of the Al Rashid Mosque's founders.

The mosque, Canada's oldest, was built in 1938 and moved to Fort Edmonton Park. Its story is important to local Muslims.

"We're hoping that the prayer rug shows that Muslims have been here for many years," Pereira says. "We're a part of this land. Newcomers can draw on that, too, as they make their place here."

The completed rug will be celebrated with community leaders at an exhibit in spring 2016. After that, The Green Room hopes the rug will be displayed permanently in Edmonton and that it can be reproduced for people to buy.



The Dalaa family in Lebanon recently. The Syrian refugees are now bound for Canada after a delay. CONTRIBUTED

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# Family on way here

## SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

### Held up in Beirut, finally coming on Wednesday

**Alex Boyd**  
Metro | Edmonton

An Edmonton-bound refugee family turned away at a Beirut airport last week now have their travel documents back and are booked on a Tuesday flight to Canada.

"Whether it was the system that got around to them, or whether all the noise we were causing got someone to intervene, I don't know," said Father Glenn McDonald from St. Joseph's College, "but the ball is rolling, so that's the key piece."

Iwan and Zamzam Dalaa, along with daughters Karima, 3, and Ayat, 15 months, fled Syria for Lebanon four years ago.

They spent the last of their money travelling to a Beirut airport last week — only to have their travel documents taken.

MacDonald said it took a trip to a United Nations office, but the family have their papers back and have been told they

can travel to Canada.

The family will first stay at a residence at the university's campus before moving into permanent accommodation.

They're the first of four groups St. Joe's helped sponsor.

While faith groups have played a big role in assisting privately sponsored refugees, St. Joe's is also part of the University of Alberta campus.

"The university, to be honest, is an ideal environment to sponsor refugees because we have international students from all over the world. Our initial pool of translators had 14 people," McDonald said.

He said they've drawn on experts from the international department, plus language and history. Doctors from the campus medical clinic offered to do initial checkups.

MacDonald said students are learning from the experience.

"The university is training our future leaders," he commented.

"We'd like them to have that experience of helping people, so they're familiar with it when they're in positions of power."

For now, they're all waiting for the plane to land on Wednesday.

"Now the real work is going to start."

**The university, to be honest, is an ideal environment to sponsor refugees because we have international students from all over the world.** Father Glenn McDonald



## CONSERVATION

# Caribou report released

Manitoba and Saskatchewan come out on top of a mediocre class in a new review of how Canada's provinces and territories are protecting vulnerable woodland caribou.

"They've been taking it seriously," said Eric Hebert-Daly, national director of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. "They've taken the bull by the horns and really driven things."

Woodland caribou are considered a strong indicator of a healthy boreal forest. While there remain about 32,000 woodland caribou across the country, their habitat is increasingly fragmented and degraded by industrial development and many herds are in danger of disappearing.

The federal government has written a recovery strategy for the animals that requires the provinces to preserve enough habitat to keep them on the landscape. Scientists say habitat for woodland caribou can be no more than 35 per cent disturbed for their numbers to remain stable.

Some provinces have stepped up, said Hebert-Daly.

In November, Manitoba created a 900-square-kilometre protected area, all of which lies within caribou range.

Saskatchewan now requires new forest management plans to demonstrate at least 65 per cent of caribou habitat will be kept undisturbed.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the new Mealy Mountains National Park will permanently protect at least one caribou herd. Quebec added 5,000 square kilometres to its roster of protected spaces, some of which is home to caribou.

And even one-time environmental bad-boy Alberta has stopped selling energy leases on caribou habitat. THE CANADIAN PRESS

# Finally our people can say, 'Yes, it happened'

## INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

## Former poet laureate on reconciliation report release

Alex Boyd  
Metro | Edmonton

Anna Marie Sewell has a favourite anecdote that illustrates how Edmonton is changing.

In 2012, when she was Edmonton's poet laureate, she was performing a poem she'd writ-

ten as a duet with then-mayor Stephen Mandel. She'd written the verses, plus a chorus for city council.

But, as she read the chorus to the councillors, she remembers some looking increasingly concerned until finally one — she doesn't remember if it was Don Iveson or Amarjeet Sohi — put up his hand.

The councillor was concerned she'd mispronounced Wicahitowin. She was stunned. "I looked at them and I said 'I know! And the point is, you know!'"

Sewell had changed the pronunciation of the Cree word,

meaning "to help" or "share with one another," to fit the rhythm of the poem, but hadn't expected anyone to pick up on it.

"I hang onto moments like that," she says.

When Sewell first moved to Edmonton in 1985, she was active in Métis politics, and says they'd have an event and send a press release to every media outlet in town. And no one would show up.

"No one cared," she says. "You'd hear, 'We know what you people want to say.'"

But today, as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) releases its final report

as part of its mandate to inform all Canadians about what happened in the Indian residential schools, Sewell sees changes.

While she stresses the work on reconciliation and the report's 94 recommendations has only just begun, the TRC has kindled a conversation that wouldn't have happened otherwise, she says.

"I think the TRC has given some context as to why a lot of those people who you might have met, doctors, lawyers, Indian chiefs, are just a little bit edgy sometimes."

She says true reconciliation will mean grappling with heavy

issues such as poverty, land use, and the inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

But she's hopeful. "Here we are, stumbling along together, hoping for some gracious conclusion. And I think the great thing about the TRC is when we do get down and sit down together," she says, "finally our people can say, 'Yes, it happened, it's real.'"

"I hope that we'll raise generations that don't think that racism and suffering and oppression are the mark of authenticity. Culture is the beautiful things that survive."



Former Edmonton poet laureate Anne Marie Sewell at the Heart Garden reconciliation project. COURTESY GIBBY DAVIS

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

## Report released on assisted dying

The practice of physician-assisted dying should be publicly funded by provinces, available to adults, and not put doctors at risk of criminal prosecution, an expert advisory panel said Monday.

The recommendations were among 43 in the final report from the Provincial-Territorial Expert Advisory Group, which

was formed with input from 10 of the country's 13 provinces and territories.

The proposed guidelines found instant favour among advocates, who praised the panel for navigating a quagmire of competing policy concerns without losing sight of patients' needs.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

## HEALTH

## Sick boy will not get costly drug coverage

A New Brunswick mother says she's devastated after the provincial government rejected her request to fund an expensive drug treatment for her seriously ill son.

Morgan Doucet is 10 and has a rare blood condition called morquio syndrome that stunts growth and causes multiple health problems, including heart and airway disease.

There is no cure, but in 2014 Health Canada approved a new drug to treat the condition called Vimizim.

Last year, Doucet's doctor asked the province to pay for the treatment, which can cost about \$200,000 a year. But in November his mother, Carole Mazerolle, got word the province had turned them down.

"I cried," said Mazerolle in a phone interview from her home in the small community of Baie-Sainte-Anne.

"I find that terrible. I have a sick child. They have a treatment there that could help him, and they won't give it to me."



Morgan Doucet CONTRIBUTED

Mazerolle said her son's condition has already deteriorated since they made the request of the province. "The more I'm waiting, the worse he's getting," she said.

A spokesman for the New Brunswick Department of Health would not discuss Doucet, citing privacy concerns. But in an email, Bruce Macfarlane noted that the national advisory body that recommends whether drugs should be covered determined that Vimizim should not be.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

### QUEBEC NO CHARGES IN 2014 BLAZE

No criminal charges will be laid in the fire that killed 32 people at a seniors' residence in Quebec nearly two years ago, the Crown announced Monday. "In light of the expert and witness testimony that was heard and the evidence gathered by investigators, the DPCP (the Crown) is not able to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a criminal act was ever committed," prosecutor Annie Landreville said.

FRANCES DROUIN/  
THE CANADIAN PRESS



# Mom tells trafficking story of her daughter

## PROSTITUTION

## 'Boyfriend pimp' took teen girl away

Hindy Pennock would drive around in circles until the early hours looking for her 13-year-old daughter. That's how it started.

Then she noticed a change in her daughter's underwear, toward lacy, lower-cut undies.

"We taught our daughter not to get into cars with strangers, but we did not prepare her for a good-looking guy to walk into her life and traffic her. We never knew about 'boyfriend' pimps," she said.

Hindy Pennock was a stay-at-home mom. Her husband was a businessman. They lived in a nice neighbourhood in Winnipeg with their two daughters. Then, they lost one.

For 12 years, Jessica was trapped, trafficked from Winnipeg to Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver, forced to have sex for money.

When she first ran away from home, she was gone a week-end. Then she was gone for a few weeks, then months. She would call home, but only for 30 seconds, enough to say, "I love you, Mommy. I'll be home sometime." Enough for Pennock to know her daughter was, at least, alive.

When Pennock looks back, she can identify some warning signs she missed all those years ago. She is publicly sharing her story to help others.

"We never thought in a million years that this could happen to her. Never, ever," she said.

The Pennocks changed provinces when Jessica was 10 and she was "horribly" bullied by her new classmates. "We saw this bright, self-reliant little girl disappear. She just started to vanish," Pennock said.

To help her daughter make friends, Pennock drove Jessica to a recreation centre. There, she met a boy who gave her crack cocaine, but said it was just like marijuana. Soon she

was addicted.

She started to lie and run away. At 15, she told her parents she was moving in with her boyfriend, but never let them meet him. Some days she would come home with her nails painted or her hair done; other days she would come home "beaten black and blue" with boot marks on her body. Jessica was silent when her parents asked what was going on.

Pennock said they went to police, psychiatrists, teachers and doctors, but no one could help.

Often the only place parents can seek help from is advocacy groups that work with victims and understand the dynamic.

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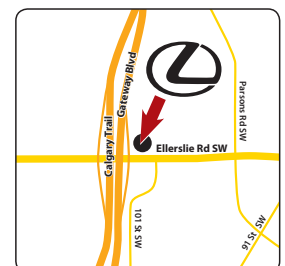
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# Trump's comments affecting children

## UNITED STATES

## Young minds suffer from Islamophobic sentiment

A backlash against American Muslims is leaving a mark on some of the nation's youngest minds.

After seeing U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump call on television for barring Muslims from entering the country, Sofia Yassini, 8, checked the locks on her family's home in Plano, Texas, imagining the army would take them away. She raced to her room and stuffed a pair of Barbie dolls, a tub of peanut butter and a toothbrush into a bag. She insisted on bringing boots for the long boat ride she imagined was coming.

When her mother, Melissa, arrived home from her work as a human resources manager, Sofia ran into her arms and cried.

"I want people to understand the impact that their words have on these children," said Melissa Yassini, who described the experience in a Facebook post that had been shared more than 21,000 times as of Monday. "We often forget, we're waging war on one another with words, and we're adults. We can take it. The kids are suffering with this. They go to school every day and they're afraid to tell people they're Muslim. This has to stop."

**“One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”**

Line from U.S. Pledge of Allegiance, recited by Ahad Khan to his son Raza Khan last week



**Sofia Yassini, 8, with her mother Melissa Yassini.** Parents say U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump's comments are causing confusion for children. LM OTERO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Anti-Muslim sentiment was building in the days before 14 people were killed Dec. 2 in the massacre at a disability centre in Southern California by a Muslim couple investigators say were inspired at least in part by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group. Experts say Trump's call Dec. 7 to keep all Muslims

from entering the U.S. — a plan he said would apply only temporarily and to non-citizens — only fanned the flames.

Muslim parents say their children hear disparaging remarks in their own communities, see hateful bumper stickers and T-shirts, and have had friends abandon them.

Ahad Khan, 12, came home from school in rural Westminster, Md., in tears because his best friend called him a future terrorist, according to Ahad's father, Raza Khan.

Khan, the chairman of the science department at Carroll Com-

munity College, shared Ahad's experience in an open letter to Trump on Facebook. As of Monday, it had been shared more than 4,300 times.

As Khan tucked his son in last week, he left him with the words he recited when he became a U.S. citizen two decades ago: "One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

"I don't know why, I don't know how people forget that," Khan said later, fighting back tears.

"We have to; otherwise we're dividing ourselves."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## GREECE

## EU to cover cost of shelter for migrants

The European Union pledged Monday to spend 80 million euros (\$88 million US) to house migrants in Greece even as it seeks tougher procedures for asylum-seekers travelling to the continent.

Kristalina Georgieva, the EU Commissioner for Budget and Human resources, signed an agreement for a rent subsidy program for up to 20,000 people next year.

Thousands of stranded refugees are currently being housed in old venues from the 2004 Olympics, at camps on Greek islands, or are sleeping in tents pitched in city squares and parks in Athens.

"The 80 million euros is for the year 2016 ... after that it would be assessed. It could be expanded," Georgieva told The Associated Press. "The number involved over the year would be quite a lot higher than 20,000."

Nearly 800,000 migrants and refugees have crossed through Greece this year, hoping to travel to northern Europe.

But Macedonia and other Balkan countries last month toughened their border rules, restricting crossings to those from war-torn nations like Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan and stranding others.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**THE EU SUBSIDY**  
Will pay for hotel vouchers and rent cheques for migrants to live in vacant Greek apartments. More than 20,000 migrants may be sheltered this way.

### IN BRIEF

#### Cosby countersues women who are suing him

Bill Cosby fired back Monday at seven women suing him for defamation.

In a countersuit, Cosby alleges the women made "malicious, opportunistic, and false and defamatory accusations" against him. Cosby is seeking monetary damages "to the maximum extent permitted by law."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

#### Chicago firefighter falls to his death down shaft

Chicago firefighter Daniel Capuano, 42, died early Monday after falling two storeys down an elevator shaft while fighting a smoky blaze in a warehouse on the city's South Side.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

#### Police officer acquitted on misconduct charges

Cmdr. Glenn Evans, a Chicago police commander accused of shoving his gun down a suspect's throat and pressing a stun gun to the man's groin was acquitted on battery and misconduct charges Monday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

#### Teacher fabricates story of attacker in France

A preschool teacher who claimed to have been attacked by a masked assailant invoking ISIL made up the story, French prosecutors said Monday.

The attack reported Monday morning by the teacher set off a manhunt in Paris.

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## INVESTIGATION

## Major retailers sell slave-peeled shrimp

Poor migrant workers and children are being sold to factories in Thailand and forced to peel shrimp that ends up in global supply chains, including those of Walmart and Red Lobster, an investigation has found.

At the Gig Peeling Factory, nearly 100 Burmese labourers were trapped, most working for almost nothing. They spent 16 hours a day with their hands in ice water, ripping the guts, heads, tails and shells off shrimp.

"They didn't let us rest," said Eae Hpaw, 16, her arms a patchwork of scars from shrimp-related infections and allergies. "We stopped working around 7 in the evening. We would take a shower and sleep. Then we would start again around 3 in the morning."

Pervasive human trafficking has helped turn Thailand into one of the world's biggest shrimp providers. Despite repeated promises by businesses

and government to clean up the \$7-billion US seafood export industry, abuses persist, fuelled by corruption and complicity among police and authorities.

Hundreds of shrimp-peeling sheds are hidden in plain sight in Samut Sakhon, an hour outside Bangkok, some with slaves locked inside. Last month, Associated Press journalists followed and filmed trucks loaded with freshly peeled shrimp from the Gig shed to major Thai exporting companies.

U.S. customs records show the shrimp made its way into the supply chains of major U.S. food stores and retailers such as Walmart, Kroger, Whole Foods, Dollar General and Petco, along with restaurants such as Red Lobster and Olive Garden. It also entered supply chains for some of America's best-known seafood brands and pet foods, including Chicken of the Sea and Fancy Feast. THE CANADIAN PRESS



**We stopped working around 7... Then we would start again around 3 in the morning.**

Eae Hpaw, 16



**Win Win Than, 25**, who worked in a shrimp shed in Samut Sakhon, Thailand, to pay off her \$550 US debt. She said she tried to run away but was caught and handcuffed in a room. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



**Soe Lay, 20**, who worked in a shrimp shed in Samut Sakhon, Thailand. He says the owner took his passport, and he was taken to the police station for eating six pieces of shrimp. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



**A police officer rides his bike between a row of cabs** blocking the street during a recent taxi drivers day of protest against Uber in Toronto. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

# Taxi industry fights back with new app

## RIDESHARING

## Unlike Uber, The Ride tacks on service provider's fees

Canada's taxi industry has a new tool in its fight against the rise of Uber.

The Ride, a new app launched on Monday, works similarly to Uber by offering passengers a more tech-savvy way to connect with local taxi-cab companies.

Like Uber, users must open

a personal profile and then use the cellphone's GPS location feature before they hail a cab through the virtual service.

Unlike Uber, The Ride comes with extra fees through your wireless provider.

The app will charge a fixed \$2 "convenience fee" for hailing a nearby taxi.

In smaller towns, where local cab companies may not support the app yet, The Ride will charge \$1 to connect the passenger to a local dispatch centre over the phone.

Toronto-based CellWand Communications created The Ride.

# \$1.2B

**The amount Canadians spent on taxis last year,** according to a report from the Competition Bureau. The agency also found Uber prices were about 36 per cent lower than a comparable cab fare.

CellWand is the company behind #TAXI, a voice phone service that connects customers to a local cab company for a service fee.

CellWand's new app also provides real-time public transit schedules for 75 cities and communities across the country, with plans to roll out data on bike-sharing services next year.

Taxi-cab operators have been clashing with Uber, urging local governments in some cities to ban the service over various concerns, such as proper licensing and insurance.

Toronto cab drivers staged a protest last week to back their call for local bylaws that would clamp down on UberX drivers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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## BANKING

## Big banks partnering with financial tech startup rivals

Financial technology startups have typically been portrayed as a band of T-shirt-clad geeks poised to snatch food off the dinner plates of the button-collared bankers.

So it may have come as a surprise to some when, rather than going head-to-head with the Bay Street behemoths, so-called fintech companies started partnering with the very incumbents they had set out to upheave.

Over the past year, chief executives at some of Canada's biggest banks have acknowledged the competitive threat posed by tech-savvy entrants.

At Royal Bank's annual meeting last spring, CEO Dave McKay noted the importance of collaborating with early-

stage companies — "even the ones trying to disrupt us."

Since then, CIBC has waded into online lending through its partnership with Montreal-based upstart Thinking

Capital, while Scotiabank has invested in Kabbage, a U.S.-based lender that serves small-to medium-sized businesses.

The year ahead is likely to see a slew of similar partnerships, say industry insiders.

"I respect that scrappy, David versus Goliath attitude amongst the startups, but I also think it leads to a lot of wasted resources and efforts," says Kevin Sandhu, founder and CEO of Grow, an online lending company that uses hundreds of pieces of data to provide loans much more quickly than a traditional bank.

"There's an opportunity to take the best of us and the best of them."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

### market minute

	<b>DOLLAR</b> 72.79¢ (+0.02¢)
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	<b>OIL</b> \$36.31 US (+69¢)
	<b>GOLD</b> \$1,063.40 US (-\$12.30)
<b>NATURAL GAS:</b> \$1.894 US (-9.6¢)	
<b>DOW JONES:</b> 17,368.50 (+103.29)	

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## YANN MARTEL: DEAR SANTA, PLEASE GIFT-WRAP THE EARTH

**Father Christmas, please take this bruised and battered world, wrap it in paper, and return it so that we might open it up with the same wonder and delight that children show when they open the gifts you bring them.**



*Letters Live, an annual celebration of the power of written correspondence held in London since 2013, was launched this year with letters to Father Christmas by such celebrities as Benedict Cumberbatch and Russell Brand. Canadian author Yann Martel also put pen to paper in a heartfelt plea to Santa.*

Dear Father Christmas, I feel impelled to write to you this year, such is the state of the world. The crisis in Syria, with its bountiful bloodshed and endless flow of refugees, the psychotic insanity of ISIL, the climate, which keeps changing for the worse while we only pretend to change our carbon-fuel-devouring ways — to name just a handful of crises that make me shake my head and drop it in my hands — what is one to do but appeal to a greater force? And you are a greater force, are you not? You still manage to make people smile, if only briefly. Is it the bringing together of

families, some of whom are genuinely glad to see each other again? Is it the music, those lovely hymns that pull at our hearts? Is it the scenes around Christmas trees that remind us of our younger, happier selves? Is it the gift-giving which, however commodified, still involves giving with the aim to please? Is it the focus on a meal that is meant not to be rushed but enjoyed in and of itself? Whatever it is, you still have an effect, don't you? Children still turn to you with glee, and

**Could you double your output? On one extra day, could you come down from your snowy realm and spread good cheer to all?**

grown-ups follow them, even if they pretend they don't want to.

I appeal to you. Father Christmas, please take this bruised and battered world, wrap it in gift-wrap paper, and return it to us so that we might open it up with the same sense of wonder and delight that children show when they open the gifts you bring them. Make this world once again the beautiful, marvellous present that it is.

I hesitate. As far as I know, no lasting cessation of hostilities, no reconciliation has ever come about as a result of your intervention. No group — neither the United Nations nor any country nor any religious or political group — has ever asked you to be a mediator or a negotiator. You are jolly and friendly and very generous, but somehow you are left to yourself in your arctic kingdom. How foolish of me then to ask world peace of you. I'm asking too much. You are as impotent as the

other great talkers of peace and love, the Jesuses and Muhammads and Krishnas and Buddhas of this world who talk love while their fervent disciples wage war and terror.

But perhaps the problem is that they ask so much of us. Jesus and Muhammad and Krishna and Buddha are demanding moral patrons. It takes a clear mind and a steady heart to follow them sensibly day in and day out. You, on the other hand, of the 365 and one-quarter days of the year, you work to have an effect on only a single day. Of course, that single day takes much preparation on your part, much like writing even the shortest poem demands much work. But still, one divided by 365.25: That's only a 0.27 per cent positive output. On one day, December 25, you are a busy man whose simple aim is to spread good cheer. And you do that job well.

So I ask this of you, only this, Father Christmas, please could you double your output? On one extra day (in summer perhaps — we do tire of winter), could you come down from your snowy realm and spread good cheer to all? Make it so that on one additional day of the year we make a Christmas-like effort to be lovingly kind to all and everyone.

World peace on two days of the year — is that too much to ask? I hope it isn't.

Yours humbly,  
Yann Martel

**Yann Martel** is a Canadian novelist and short-story writer. He is the author of 2001's *Life of Pi*, which won the Man Booker Prize. He lives and writes in Saskatoon.

## ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

### Make peace with holiday chaos and savour the season

I met a friend for coffee, and neither of us had words for how we're doing.

"Blaahh!" she said with her hands flailing in the air.

It had taken us an extended series of emails to finally pick a time and place to meet — we're each busy, our brains full, at this time of year. She has better reasons: kids, the culmination of a few major projects, the anticipation of a few more. But even I — who normally have ample time for *Gilmore Girls* reruns — have been packing my days with holiday get-togethers tight as a bulging suitcase.

My sense of calm is out the window, and it's wonderful.

The drink date with a few friends where I meet someone new, funny and charmingly opinionated.

The dinner date where we decided to attend one random event a week in 2016 and call it *The Outing* (Salsa! Pottery! An academic lecture of the esoteric kind!).

The lunch with my aunt and uncle where politics stayed off the table and we bonded over old stories of my grandmother, which expand in the retelling.

The brunch/skate/The Power Plant gallery trip where we ate slowly, slid on ice as the lake water rippled by and

found ourselves in a beautiful, yet repellent, infestation of black paper butterflies.

The drunken debate over communism at the pub. The "once a year whether you need it or not" lunch with an old family friend and his joke-ready compatriots. The cosy, classic dinner at my home away from home.

And the other morning's coffee date, which left me excited about everything, and convinced of all things hopeful, most especially the joy of new friends.

In a city where I can go months without seeing some people, this time of year is a whirlwind of love, a helter-skelter romp through relationships, a fast-track reminder of how lucky I am, how rich in kind people.

This is the Christmas feeling. Of time well spent. Each little visit its own small gift. Its own chance to be smitten, and to feel good about who you are, and where you are, and who you know. That can be an elusive sense much of the year, when you're just trying to get by, and get something done, while the world seems held up by intractable wars, unfathomable suffering and impending doom of one kind or another.

Perhaps it is, but it is not only.

And as it turns out, it doesn't take much, or long, to see the precious side.

Just a cup of coffee.

**It doesn't take much to see the precious side.**



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# Period pieces are trending

## APPS

## Women's health goes high-tech

In the tech world, women's health is at the forefront — with hundreds of apps focusing on everything from getting pregnant to detecting breast cancer. Lots of other high-tech products in the works too, from Bluetooth-connected menstrual cups to high-tech pill cases that send an alert to your phone if you skip your birth control.

Not surprisingly, women around the world are embracing it all.

Travel writer Natalie Predie Zamojc, 30, and her husband Mark are trying to have a baby, and Zamojc is using a popular period tracking app — aptly named Period Tracker — to see when she's most fertile. It gives her a sense of control over a process that's often based on luck, she says.

"Now, it'll send me a message being like, 'You've ovulating!' and then it's go, go, go," Zamojc says with a laugh.

As the New York Times reported earlier this year, two period tracking apps alone — GP International's Period Tracker, the app Zamojc swears by, and Abishkking's Period Calendar/Tracker — have been downloaded more than 10 million times from the Android store, based on data from the IMS Institute for Healthcare Informatics.



**Pillsy, an app coupled with a unique pouch, helps women keep on top of taking their birth control.** COLE BURSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Recently, thousands backed a Kickstarter campaign for the Looncup, raising over \$160,000 for the silicone cup that sends fluid volume updates to your phone or Apple Watch through a sensor.

And, according to a 2014 TechCrunch report, women's health apps raised more money in the previous year "than all other health-focused apps combined."

It's a big business — and one that's empowering for women, says Toronto-based sexual health educator Lyba Spring. "Anything that gives a woman more control over her reproductive health and

her fertility... is a good thing," she says. Certain aspects of women's health should involve a family doctor, Spring adds — like understanding the changes in cervical mucus, for instance — but for basic health and fertility issues, apps are definitely useful, she says.

Jennifer Aldoretta, CEO of Groove, an American company whose app of the same name helps women track their cycles, was born out of its founder's own lengthy reproductive health struggles.

"My period brought with it horrible cramps," Aldoretta recalls. "I would vomit from the pain."

Aldoretta started doing her own research on reproductive health and hormones, which led her to develop the Groove app, which she now uses to manage her painful cramps without having to take the pill.

The app, which launched for the iPhone in 2014, allows her to track certain physiological changes that occur throughout your menstrual cycle — such as basal body temperature and cervical fluid secretion — which are both influenced by hormone levels, she says.

Apps can definitely be helpful for women, with many offering a "simple,

cost-effective way" to prevent, or make possible, a pregnancy, says Dr. Yolanda Kirkham, an obstetrician-gynecologist who works at Women's College Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre in Toronto. She's noticed a rise in the number of her patients using period trackers and other apps, she says, and encourages her patients to try them out. Women just need to be smart and research the apps and technology they're using, Kirkham says. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



**The Looncup sends fluid volume updates to your phone through a sensor.**

## + HEALTH

### Birth control reminder

Women on the pill make up nearly half of all unplanned pregnancies. With that in mind, a six-person team of University of Toronto graduate students has been developing Pillsy, a smart pouch and app that knows if someone takes their birth control pill — and reminds them when they don't. "We've had a number of women come to us and say they're anxious and not on the birth control pill, but if they had the Pillsy pouch and app, they'd trust themselves more to go on the birth control pill," says Pillsy CTO Valentin Peretroukhin.

# WHERE SANTA LIVES



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**ROSE REISMAN THE SAVVY EATER****THIS WEEK:** Holiday Drinks

Two Yuletide favourites are apple cider and eggnog, however one of these bevies belongs on the naughty list.

**PICK THIS****PC Fresh Pressed Sweet Apple Cider**

Portion 1 cup  
Calories 120  
Fat 0 g  
Sugar 28 g

**SKIP THIS****PC World's Best Egg Nog**

Portion 1 cup  
Calories 290  
Fat 11 g  
Sugar 34 g

**HERE'S WHY****Equivalent to 2 small Grilled Chicken subs from Mr. Sub**

Eggnog packs over double the calories and has 11gm of fat (half of it saturated) compared to the fat-free cider. If you're spiking your 'nog, you're adding even more calories. The cider is purely fresh pressed apples with no filtration process. The sugar comes from the apples themselves. Heat the cider and add some cinnamon and nutmeg. Even a small amount of alcohol will still make for a healthier Yuletide beverage than the eggnog.

# Cooking for **1**

**SINGLE SERVING****Pack a one-portion punch with these shop and prep ideas**

Millennials and seniors might be at opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to age, but many have something in common: difficulty cooking at home for just one person.

For members of the younger generation, they may lack cooking skills, which can make forays into the kitchen intimidating.

"I think for seniors in particular there's that social isolation ... When you're on your own you might not feel like cooking for yourself," says registered dietitian Shannon Crocker.

There are other challenges for singles. Much of the packaged food in grocery stores is geared toward families. Relatively few cookbooks are targeted at preparing meals for one.

But many retailers are embracing single consumers. Some grocery stores roast their own

**SEVEN TASTY TIPS**

1. Shop every few days for smaller portions of fresh produce.
2. Buy just what you need at the bulk store. Or find a shopping buddy and split bigger packages.
3. Prep on weekends to save time. Make a casserole or stew, then freeze in individual portions. Make a batch of barley or pasta to parcel out during the week.
4. Reinvent leftovers. Roast a pan of veggies for one dinner. Toss the remainder with pasta, goat cheese and nuts another night.
5. A small tin of tuna, a couple of hard-boiled eggs or half a can of chickpeas or black beans can be used to top packaged salad greens
6. Meals don't always have to consist of meat, potato or starch and a vegetable. Add lentils to soup or extra veggies to an omelette or sandwich.
7. If you're a tea-and-toast person, look for ways to make toast more nutritious and interesting. Spread whole-grain toast with peanut butter and top with thinly sliced apple and cinnamon. Pop it briefly under the broiler. Or top toast with avocado, hummus and tomato slices. Other options: a fried egg and some sautéed mushrooms; or a soft poached egg and a piece of cheese on toast. Put some arugula under the egg to boost flavour.

meat and vegetables that can be mixed with grains cooked at home for a nutritious meal, says Crocker of Ancaster, Ont.

And stores commonly have large displays of prepackaged salads or stir-fry kits for added convenience. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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# Negative thoughts age badly: Study

## RESEARCH

### Stereotypes about aging affect hearing, memory

If you believe growing old will claim your memory and degrade your senses, it could become a self-fulfilling prophecy, a new study has found.

Negative perceptions about aging, and what will happen to our minds and bodies as the years wear on, can influence how we feel about ourselves and, by extension, have an impact on how we go into that dark night, says a study published in the December issue of *Psychology and Aging*.

"People's feelings about getting older influence our sensory and cognitive functions," says University of Toronto psychology professor Alison Chasteen, lead author of the study titled *Do Negative Views of Aging Influence Memory and Auditory Performance Through Self-Perceived Abilities?*

"The worse your view of aging, the worse you tend to

feel about your own abilities, and the worse you perform."

Until now, Chasteen says, aging research has focused on performance — and the differences on tests of memory and hearing at various ages.

But there hasn't been much exploration of an aging person's general views on getting older. And how that relates to their own experience. This study, Chasteen says, marks the first time researchers have put all three variables together to try and make links between them.

Between 2012 and 2013, about 301 participants

between the ages of 56 and 96 — all with different levels of ability — submitted to a variety of tests at labs on the University of Toronto's downtown campus.

In addition to a hearing test,

participants' memories were assessed — they were asked to repeat lists of words they saw on a computer screen and, at other times, heard through headphones. They were tasked with recalling a list of five words after a five-minute delay.

Researchers gauged each participants' views on aging by asking them to rate their level of concern in 15 scenarios that involve growing older.

For instance, they were instructed to choose a number between 1 and 9 to indicate how worried they felt about, say, losing their independence as time wears on or, to be blamed for a car accident because of their age — even if fault was unclear. They were also asked to agree or disagree with statements such as "I am good at remembering names," or "I can



**“The worse your view of aging, the worse you tend to feel about your own abilities, and the worse you perform.”**

Alison Chasteen, researcher

ily have a conversation on the telephone."

Through complex statistical analysis, Chasteen says, researchers discovered that

participants who scored high on the "stigma concern scale," and the "fear of aging scale,"

felt worse about their abilities and, in turn, fared worse on the hearing and memory tests.

The data held up even when researchers considered whether participants who had failing hearing and memories had realistic views of their own abilities, she says.

Individuals interpret their declining abilities in different

ways and how they feel about them dictates whether or not they will try, by keeping busy and active, to maintain their function — and stimulate mind and body, Chasteen says.

The study also looked at the relationship between hearing and memory performance. Researchers discovered that seniors who did poorly on hearing tests also performed poorly on memory tests.

That could indicate that some problems remembering might be a function of a senior's inability to hear all the information.

"That could be part of the problem," Chasteen says. "When working with older adults reporting memory problems — we might want to check their hearing."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



**In a study, participants who scored high on the "fear of aging scale" felt worse about their abilities and also did worse on tests.**

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## DATING DUO

# Bieber's stepping out with Kourtney

This is one I certainly did not see coming. In what could possibly just be a case of some tabloid editor playing around with their celebrity gossip Magnetic Poetry set, Justin Bieber is now rumored to be making kissy-kissy with ... Kourtney Kardashian? I think I read that right. The 21-year-old Canadian serial apologist and the 36-year-old recently single reality TV star were spotted hitting up a club in L.A.

together recently and departing in the same SUV. And according to CNN, a source says they were "making out," so there you go. Bieber, however, has also been spotted squiring a mystery blonde around town — and on a yachting excursion — but the gossip is that he and the Kardashian who isn't Kim or Khloe are "casually" seeing each other. So there's that.

NED EHRBAR/METRO HOLLYWOOD



## GOSSIP BRIEF

**Mariah's holiday chart topper not quite as sparkly** Mariah Carey's holiday hit All I Want For Christmas Is You is 20 years old. Yes, two decades. Since its release, it has been played practically on loop every holiday season — even by people who don't celebrate Christmas. But now, the Christmas queen

has been dethroned.

According to PlayNet-work, The Shins' cover of Paul McCartney's Wonderful Christmastime is now the most played holiday song, bumping Carey down to No. 2. Christina Aguilera's song Christmas Time rounds out the top three. EMILY LAURENCE/METRO NEW YORK

JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

# Being funny is in the delivery

**THE SHOW:** Brooklyn Nine-Nine, S3, E6 (City/Fox)  
**THE MOMENT:** The Practice Breakup

Captain Raymond Holt (Andre Braugher) and Detective Rosa Diaz (Stephanie Beatriz) are in his office. She's been dating his nephew, Marcus, which has made them hilariously uncomfortable together, because they are the most deadpan, least emotionally demonstrative people on Earth. (Both actors remain straight-faced and even-voiced at all times.)

Now that Diaz is breaking up with Marcus, she and Holt are sad (they like each other), but mainly relieved (they can return to deadpan emotionlessness). "I've been told it helps to acknowledge the dumppee's feelings," Holt says. "Ew," Diaz replies. "Don't worry, we'll practice," he says. She straightens her shoulders. "Marcus," she says to Holt, "I think we should break up." "That makes me feel sad. I am sad," he replies. "Your sadness is noted," she says. "I feel acknowledged," he says. "It will take me eight minutes to collect my things." They smile,



**Captain Raymond Holt, right, and Detective Rosa Diaz do a hilariously deadpan rehearsal Diaz's breakup with Holt's nephew Marcus, in Brooklyn Nine-Nine.** CONTRIBUTED

albeit tightly. That went well.

To achieve greatness as a sitcom, the humour must cease stemming from one-liners and plot points, and start stemming from the characters simply behaving as their funny selves. Brooklyn Nine-Nine hit that sweet spot early. The characters'

foibles and frictions were well-defined, and the actors bounced off each other with glee. At the start of this season, plot intervened — Holt was transferred out of the unit. Thankfully the folks in charge realized their mistake and brought him back home. Now everyone can get

back to doing what they do best: pushing each other's buttons, and letting us chuckle at how "them" they are.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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# CAREER IN PAINTING AWAITS

Professional painting entails more than slapping paint on a wall. According to the regional managing director of one of Alberta's leading commercial painting companies, it is a creative and financially-rewarding career.

"Painters aren't only creative with techniques, they also have to be creative on the business side," says SuperPro Painting Systems' Randy Fatt. "Everything from helping clients to choose the right colour for their space to setting up the job takes creativity."

Aside from an imaginative side, painters should also possess manual dexterity, be able to lift equipment such as ladders, have a desire to be precise and thorough, not be afraid to work at varying heights and have an eye for detail, Fatt says.

Albertacanada.com, which provides

information about doing business in Alberta, reported that, in 2013, the province had the highest national labour force participation rate at 73.1 per cent, compared to a national average of 66.5 per cent. The 2013 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, meanwhile, reported that Albertans in this occupational group earned on average from \$19.34 to \$27.32 an hour.

"As professionalism in Alberta's painting industry increases, it is the painters who are journeyman certified who are able to take on larger and better projects for more money," says Fatt. "SuperPro Painting Systems provides a 12-week Certified Learning in Painting painter and decorator pre-apprenticeship program that follows the Alberta apprenticeship outline to help aspiring painters launch careers."

# Stay healthy this winter

As cold and flu season kicks into high gear, here's what you need to do to get your defenses ready and stay healthy this winter.

First things first — start with a shot of prevention. Vaccination is the number one way to reduce your risk of severe flu symptoms this year. If you want to learn more about the flu shot, ask your Shoppers Drug Mart pharmacist or visit [shoppers-drugmart.ca/flushot](http://shoppers-drugmart.ca/flushot).

Remember that not all seasonal illnesses are prevented by the flu vaccine. Cold and flu germs are easily spread through contact with contaminated surfaces — anything from door knobs and shopping cart handles to faucets and even items of clothing.

Scrub your hands well with soap and warm water for 15 to 20 seconds after touching anything that might carry germs. Be sure to have hand sanitizer nearby for when you can't wash.

Lack of sleep may compromise the immune system, so missing out on your zzzz's may make you more vulnerable to



SHUTTERSTOCK

colds and flu. Sleep better by avoiding heavy meals or large amounts of liquid before bed. Studies suggest that sticking to a sleep schedule is also important for a good night's sleep.

Studies also show that vitamin D may help boost the immune system.

In winter, those of us in northern climates may be missing out on "the sunshine vitamin," so consider loading up on foods rich in vitamin D like milk and salmon. Enhance your diet with a vitamin D supplement or a multivitamin to help you stay healthy this winter.

# Feel better when you're under the weather

Even if you're careful about prevention, you still may come down with a bug this winter. Check with your pharmacist to see which medications may be right for you.

### For throat and chest

Robitussin Cough Control Extra Strength with Mucus and Phlegm Relief works to relieve sore throat pain, dry coughs and chest congestion.

### For sinuses

Otrivin® Saline Severe Congestion Relief is a powerful, naturally sourced nasal spray that

unblocks nasal passages and relieves nasal and sinus congestion. Breathe Right® non-medicated nasal strips instantly open up the nose and are available for both adults and kids. Advil® Cold & Sinus opens airways by shrinking swollen nasal passages, making it easier to breathe.

### For kids

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# Star Wars primer

Frozen in carbonite for the last 38 years? Recently returned from exile on Dagobah? You can still turn your watercooler into the Mos Eisley Cantina with this Star Wars 101 crash course, just in time for *The Force Awakens*. **COLIN MCNEIL/METRO**

In four days, the Force will awaken for the first time in a decade.

A new Star Wars movie is coming out, and in case you haven't heard, advance ticket sales have shattered records. Star Wars-branded merchandise has already done \$1 billion in sales — and no one's even seen the movie yet.

But after 38 years, six feature-length films and more novels, comics and TV shows than you can shake a lightsaber at, why is the world going crazy for another Star Wars movie?

Well, for one thing, George Lucas had nothing to do with it, having sold the franchise to Disney for a cool \$4 billion in 2012. And believe it or not, that's a relief to many diehard fans.

They had their hearts broken when Lucas decided to alter his original masterpieces in the 1990s by inserting gratuitous computer animation and changing essential details in character-defining scenes (read: Greedo shooting first).

Then there's the nostalgia factor. The last time anyone got this excited for a new Star Wars movie, we got Jar Jar Binks and a sour taste in our mouths for the price of admission. But those were the prequels — weird, lame prequels that took some of our favourite characters and ideas, and blew them up like the Death Star blew up Alderaan.

To that end, Disney has very consciously tried to entwine this new film with the classics we all know and love.

The trailers are light on new characters, heavy

on X-Wings, Han and Chewie, and goosebump-inducing shots of the Millennium Falcon.

So for every fan who's been holding on to their VHS copies of the original trilogy, for every kid that came out of the theatre in 1999 confused and disappointed, *The Force Awakens* has been a long time coming.

## How to watch the originals, originally

For a long time, VHS copies of the original trilogy, pre-George Lucas tampering, were the only legal way to see the movies without the 1990s special edition changes.

That changed in 2006 when the original theatrical versions were released on a limited edition DVD bonus disc.

But even those versions are poor quality. The DVD transfers are not formatted for modern TVs, and suffer from colour issues. And the VHS versions... well, they're on VHS.

My suggestion? If you truly want to watch the films as they were originally released, with the right colours, cuts and frames, there is a lovingly crafted fan-made version of the first film available online in HD called *The Despecialized Edition*.

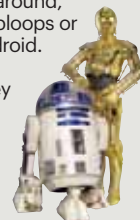
A years-long project with many collaborators, *The Despecialized Edition* edits, colour corrects and tweaks nearly every frame of *Episode IV: A New Hope* to bring it back to exactly (or damn close to) how it appeared on the big screen in 1977.

## WHO'S WHO

### Droids

A catchall term for robots, shorthand for androids. Anything made of metal that moves around, bleeps and bloops or speaks is a droid.

Though sentient, they possess no inherent rights or freedoms as beings.



### Stormtroopers

The mainstay of the Empire's foot soldiers, these iconically armoured warriors have been present in nearly every Star Wars film. And yes, they're human beings underneath the armour.



### Sleek spaceships

Almost true characters themselves, Star Wars symbolism is rife with iconic spaceships like the rough and tough Millennium Falcon, the darkly sleek Tie fighters, and the rebels' go-to space fighter of choice, the X-Wing.

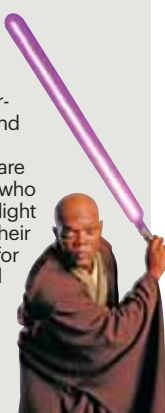
### Sith

The evil anti-thesis to the Jedi, they harness the power of the Dark Side of the Force. There can be only two Sith in existence at one time — a master, and an apprentice. These guys wield red lightsabers and adopt a 'decapitate first, ask questions later' attitude.

### Jedi

Some-where between medieval knights of Arthurian legend and mystic druids, Jedi are Force users who tap into the light side, using their power only for defence and knowledge.

COLIN MCNEIL/  
METRO



## 3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW GOING IN



### 1 All in the family

The ties that bind the Star Wars universe — through its soon-to-be seven films, myriad novels and television shows — are familial ones. The story begins with a young Anakin Skywalker, who (spoiler alert!) grows into a Jedi Knight, falls to the Dark Side, and is defeated by his own children, Luke and Leia.

And it gets much deeper: Luke's mentors are the

same as his father's, his droid companion C-3PO was built by his father. Darth Sidious (a.k.a. Emperor Palpatine) hails from the same planet as Luke's mother.

With *The Force Awakens* set 30 years after *Return of the Jedi*, and a slew of new characters, it's a safe bet the Skywalker and Solo family trees will grow more branches. Just who are they and how are they related to the Skywalker legacy? Not even Jedi clairvoyance could reveal that.

### 2 The Force?

Obi-Wan Kenobi called the Force an "energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us and penetrates us. It binds the galaxy together." That's the philosophical view.

The prequel trilogy, much to the displeasure of many fans, boiled the Force down to quantifiable, microscopic particles called midi-chlorians. The higher a being's midi-chlorian count, the more potentially powerful they could be



in the ways of the Force.

There are two very broad categories of Force users — light side and dark side. The light side of the Force is all about peace, love and knowledge. Namaste. The dark side are the naughty ones — they use raw emotions like anger, fear and even love as their power base.

### 3 Empire vs. Rebellion

The bad guys in the original Star Wars trilogy, and likely in *The Force Awakens*, are the Galactic Empire — a totalitarian regime ruled by a Sith lord. The Empire is a xenophobic organization that enforces its rule of law with blaster rifles and storm troopers. In past films, they have not hesitated to commit genocide on a planetary scale.

The rebellion is a group of volunteer freedom fighters who stand against the Empire,



trying to restore the Republic of old. Always outnumbered and outgunned, they fought a desperate battle against the Empire, finally toppling it thanks in large part to a young man named Luke Skywalker.

From what we know from the *Episode VII* trailers, The Empire, or a splinter of it, has survived decades after the fall of the second Death Star.

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Pete Rose's latest application for reinstatement to baseball was rejected by MLB commissioner Rob Manfred

# Oilers make it 6 straight

NHL

## Winning streak extended with overtime win in Boston

Andrej Sekera scored 41 seconds into overtime to lift the Edmonton Oilers to their sixth straight win, 3-2 over the Boston Bruins on Monday night.

Cam Talbot made 47 saves, and Jordan Eberle and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins scored first-period goals for Edmonton. The victory halted an eight-game losing streak in Boston for the Oilers, fresh off a 5-0 home-stand — their best since 1987.

MONDAY In Boston

3	2
OILERS	BRUINS

The Oilers won the overtime faceoff and rushed into the Boston zone. Sekera won it with a wrister from the slot after backup goalie Jonas Gustavsson stopped one shot.

The Bruins had tied it on Brad Marchand's goal with 4:38 to play in regulation.

Matt Beleskey also scored for Boston, which has earned at least one point in each of its last 16 games against the Oilers (13-0-3).

Gustavsson made 21 saves. Top goalie Tuukka Rask had



Oilers goalie Cam Talbot pokes the puck away from Bruins left-winger Matt Beleskey in Boston on Monday.

CHARLES KRUPA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

the night off in the midst of a hot stretch, posting a 6-0-2 mark in his last eight starts.

The Oilers came in with a 4-10-1 record on the road.

The Bruins had excellent scoring chances in the opening minutes of the game, but the Oilers grabbed a 1-0 lead when Eberle scored off a rebound

from the edge of the crease at 8:29 of the first period.

Edmonton made it 2-0 when Nugent-Hopkins scored on his own rebound 13:58 into the first. Bruins defenceman Zdeno Chara lost his balance trying to play a puck in the corner, and Eberle set up Nugent-Hopkins in the slot.

The Bruins got a break when Beleskey's soft shot slipped between Talbot's body and the left post, slicing it to 2-1 late in the second.

Edmonton was held without a shot on goal for nearly 17 minutes in the second.

Marchand tied it with a rising wrister inside the left post

from the right circle. It was his team-leading 15th of the season. Edmonton challenged that Boston was offside, but the call stood.

The Bruins host Pittsburgh on Wednesday. Edmonton faces the Rangers on Tuesday, the second game of a four-game road trip. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## IN BRIEF

### Coaching change fails to spur Pens to victory

T.J. Oshie scored twice and added an assist as the Washington Capitals spoiled Mike Sullivan's head coaching debut for the Pittsburgh Penguins in a 4-1 win on Monday night.

Nicklas Backstrom had a goal and two assists for Washington. John Carlson added his fifth goal of the season for the Metropolitan Division leaders. Braden Holtby stopped 44 of Pittsburgh's season-high 45 shots.

Evgeni Malkin scored his team-leading 14th goal for the Penguins, who fired Mike Johnston over the weekend.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### Ducks' Thompson docked \$26K for head hit on Faulk

Anaheim Ducks forward Nate Thompson was suspended Monday for three games without pay for an illegal check to the head of Carolina defenceman Justin Faulk during a 5-1 loss to the Hurricanes last week.

The NHL said that based on his average annual salary, Thompson will forfeit \$25,806, which will go to the Players' Emergency Assistance Fund.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### Crawford snags first star after two-shutout week

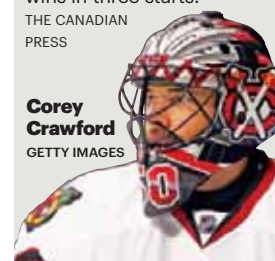
Chicago goaltender Corey Crawford was named the NHL's first star of the week on Monday with a 0.33 goals-against average, .989 save percentage and two shutouts in three Blackhawks wins.

Edmonton left-winger Taylor Hall was the second star with three goals and three assists, including two game-winning goals.

Defenceman Justin Faulk was third star with three goals and three assists to lead Carolina to a pair of wins in three starts.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Corey Crawford  
GETTY IMAGES



WORLD JUNIORS

## There's a Point in Canada's gold-medal plan



Brayden Point was selected to Canada's world junior team despite missing action recently with a shoulder injury.

AARON VINCENT ELKAIM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

It's rare that Brayden Point gets overshadowed.

Head coach Dave Lowry announced that Point was cleared to resume contact drills with Canada's junior team on Sunday, but less than an hour later the Vancouver Canucks gave forward Jake Virtanen permission to join the national roster ahead of the world junior championships.

Virtanen's addition grabbed the headlines, but Point's being cleared to play — after wearing a non-contact yellow jersey throughout selection camp to avoid damage to an injured shoulder — is also big news.

“

It takes some time, but it feels good.

Brayden point on returning from an injured shoulder.

der — is also big news.

“It's exciting,” Point told reporters on Sunday. “It's exciting to see what the lines are going to be so I'm looking forward to it.”

Both Point and Virtanen were on Canada's gold medal-winning team last year, with Virtanen

making the NHL in November while Point returned to the WHL's Moose Jaw Warriors.

Point has continued to develop as a dynamic, playmaking centre and is fifth in the WHL's points race with 18 goals and 25 assists. He played in 19 games before injuring his shoulder in a loss to Prince Albert on Nov. 17.

He hasn't played since then but practised at Canada's selection camp in Toronto before heading to Imatra, Finland, on Monday night for more training and pre-competition exhibition games. THE CANADIAN PRESS



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# Serena honoured for 'amazing' year

**TENNIS**

## Dominant 2015 puts star on cover of Sports Illustrated

Serena Williams is Sports Illustrated's Sportsperson of the Year — the first female athlete honoured on her own by the magazine in more than 30 years.

Williams came within two matches of tennis' first calendar-year Grand Slam since 1988, a bid that ended with a semifinal loss at the U.S. Open.

In all, the 34-year-old American went 53-3 during 2015 with five titles, including at the Australian Open, French Open and Wimbledon. Williams was No. 1 in the WTA rankings all season.

"She was the most deserving person for the award. She had an amazing year. The way she won her events; the fact that she's done this for so many years at such a high level," said Paul Fichtenbaum, editor of the Sports Illustrated Group. "She was a terrific candidate in a year of terrific candidates."

The cover photo of Williams — in high heels, sitting on a throne — was "her idea, intended ... to express her own ideal of femininity, strength, power," managing editor Christian Stone wrote on SI.com.

Monday's announcement marks a switch to the formal name of the SI award; past recipients were touted as Sportsman or Sportswoman of the Year. "We just felt this was a natural evolution. ... We're not making a huge deal out of it," Fichtenbaum said. "It just feels



The cover of the 2015 Sportsperson of the Year issue of Sports Illustrated, featuring tennis player Serena Williams. YU TSAI FOR SPORTS ILLUSTRATED/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

like the right time to make the change."

Runner Mary Decker in 1983 was the last female athlete to earn the magazine's award by herself. The U.S. women's national soccer team was picked by SI in 1999; speedskater Bonnie Blair in 1994 and gymnast Mary Lou Retton in 1984 were co-honorees with male Olympians. In 2011, Tennessee women's basketball coach

**“**  
**She was the most deserving person for the award.**  
Sports Illustrated Group editor Paul Fichtenbaum

Pat Summitt shared the award with Duke men's coach Mike Krzyzewski.

"Men's sports has dominated until recently, when women's sports has grown in popularity, and the competition is better than ever," Fichtenbaum said. "There's more of a focus on women's sports now. It's grown considerably."

Other tennis players honoured by SI were Arthur Ashe in 1992, Chris Evert in 1976, Billie Jean King in 1972.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**MLB**

## Giants signal intent with Cueto signing

The San Francisco Giants' upgraded rotation is taking shape, with the 2014 World Series champions agreeing Monday with Johnny Cueto on a six-year contract.

Cueto, who won the 2015 World Series with the Royals, is set to join a rotation led by left-hander Madison Bumgarner and new addition righty Jeff Samardzija, who was introduced Friday after formalizing his \$90-million, five-year contract — one week after the team

lost out to the Diamondbacks on Zack Greinke. Cueto's deal was pending a physical, the team said, and contains a team option for 2022.

Under the agreement, Cueto can opt out after the 2017 season and become a free agent again. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Johnny Cueto  
GETTY IMAGES

**IN BRIEF**

**Leicester continue to surprise by beating troubled Blues to go top**  
English football's most lethal double act propelled Leicester to a 2-1 win over stumbling champion Chelsea in the Premier League on Monday, with goals by Jamie Vardy and Riyad Mahrez keeping them top of the standings.  
The most remarkable Premier League story in years shows no sign of ending. After only narrowly avoiding relegation last campaign, Leicester leads the league by two points.  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Victorious Pacers' Hill too steep for Raptors to climb**  
Jordan Hill had 20 points and 13 rebounds, Monta Ellis had 18 points and the Indiana Pacers beat the Raptors 106-90 on Monday night to end Toronto's four-game winning streak.  
C.J. Miles added 17 points for the Pacers, who have won two of three games.  
Kyle Lowry and DeMar DeRozan each scored 20 points for the Raptors. Toronto lost for the first time after winning four straight.  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



# RECIPE Slow Cooker Butter Chicken



PHOTO: MAMA YISNEY

**Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh**  
For Metro Canada

A dreamy version of the traditional Indian dish using healthy coconut oil instead of butter.

**Ready in**  
Prep time: 10 minutes  
Cook time: 6 hours  
**Serves 6**

- Ingredients**
- 2 lb chicken thighs or breasts, cut into bite-sized pieces
  - 1 onion, chopped
  - 4 cloves of garlic, minced
  - 1 tsp minced ginger
  - 147 ml tube of tomato paste

- 1 heaping Tbsp curry
- 1 400 ml can coconut milk
- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 Tbsp coconut oil
- Small handful of cilantro for garnish

- Directions**
1. Put everything in the slow cooker and stir it all around.
  2. Close the lid. Set the timer for 6 hours. Don't worry if you need to be away from home for 8 hours or longer — it will be okay.
  3. Serve with a big spoonful of jasmine rice and a sprinkling of cilantro.

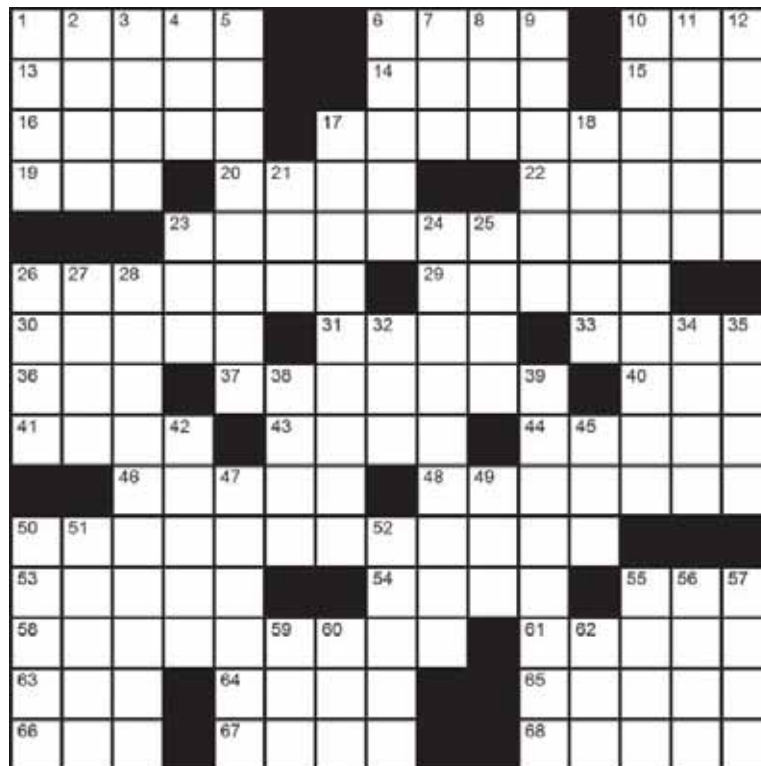
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# CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

## ACROSS

1. Cook the broccoli
6. Actor Jared
10. Bar serving
13. Red Hot \_\_ Peppers
14. Architect Mr. Saarinen
15. 'Passion' suffix
16. Paddled
17. Vancouver's province denizen, British \_\_
19. Suit part
20. Intend
22. "Doctor Zhivago" (1965) character
23. Song from Leonard Cohen's 2014 'Popular Problems' album that goes "But I was taken out of Egypt / I was bound to a burden...": 3 wds.
26. Mr. Hall of TV talk
29. Buddy of "The Beverly Hillbillies"
30. \_\_ Ste. Marie, ON
31. Coat the highway
33. Increases two-fold, for short
36. Baby dog
37. Cobblers, at times
40. 'King' of France
41. Winter hill ride
43. A \_\_ (Record company division)
44. Take away weapons
46. Steal, archaically
48. Canadian comic actor Rick
50. Foothills of The



- Rockies destination in BC known for dinosaur tracks: 2 wds.
53. Has \_\_ (Is able to escape)
54. "Dedicated to the \_\_ Love" by The Shirelles
55. "Huh...?"
58. Hockey: Sidney

- Crosby's nickname: 3 wds.
61. Someone sympathetic
63. Hot season in Montreal
64. Crossed out
65. Stave off
66. Hotdog's li'l topping

67. Off-road rides, commonly
68. Loans

## DOWN

1. Glaswegian
2. Popular cuisine
3. Ireland
4. Bitter \_\_
5. 15th or 16th on

- calendars
6. A famous Tea
7. Conger, for one
8. \_\_Paz (Canadian Hip Hop group)
9. Pizazzes
10. Kellogg's cereal with 'Two Scoops!': 2 wds.
11. Someone from

- Salt Lake City's state, variantly
12. Ms. Suvari's
17. Kitchen gadget: 2 wds.
18. Blatted
21. Verdi aria: " \_\_ Tu"
23. Opera singing style, \_\_ canto
24. Leonard Cohen song (from the album at #23-Across) which is the theme tune of the most recent season of HBO's "True Detective"
25. Trucker-to-trucker talker
26. Some slitherers
27. Mr. Julia
28. Linda Evangelista, for one
32. Municipal council member, e.g.
34. Ms. Loughlin
35. A famous Molly
38. Icicle holder
39. \_\_ mask (Operating room necessity)
42. Launch
45. Hebrides 'no'
47. Tennis legend Ms. Gibson
49. Keats specialty
50. Electroshock-er
51. Amalgamate
52. Banned-in-sports substances, slang-style
55. Small songbird
56. Farm group
57. Mr. Linkletter's
59. \_\_ number
60. Mr. Bacon, briefly
62. Street sort, shortly

# ★ IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

**Aries** March 21 - April 20  
You seem more easy-going and that's good. However, where money is concerned you cannot afford to be too laid-back or you will attract hangers-on and spongers and find yourself out of pocket. Watch your cashflow.

**Taurus** April 21 - May 21  
Partnership matters will go smoothly after the upsets and upheavals of recent weeks. You are a lot less competitive, and a lot more relaxed, in one-to-one situations.

**Gemini** May 22 - June 21  
Cosmic activity in your opposite sign of Sagittarius will remind you that you cannot always be top dog. If you want to get things done you must be ready to work with others.

**Cancer** June 22 - July 23  
Avoid stressful situations, especially if you are the kind of Cancer who gets upset when things go wrong. Nothing can be allowed to put your health at risk.

**Leo** July 24 - Aug. 23  
Raise your sights and show the world what you are capable of. Don't allow yourself to be distracted by trivial things, and don't try to be all things to all people.

**Virgo** Aug. 24 - Sept. 23  
Others may complain that nothing is happening but life is what you make of it and you are determined to make something really good. Show all the moaning minnies what a positive attitude can accomplish!

**Libra** Sept. 24 - Oct. 23  
Do you carry on along your present course or do you change direction and try something different? It might help to talk it over with friends and family. They can see your situation from a less personal perspective.

**Scorpio** Oct. 24 - Nov. 22  
You need to take your cashflow situation more seriously than you have been. If resources are low then there are only two ways to build them up again: spend less or earn more.

**Sagittarius** Nov. 23 - Dec. 21  
Don't be scared to take a few chances and try your hand at something new. Leave your comfort zone and accomplish something truly worthwhile.

**Capricorn** Dec. 22 - Jan. 20  
If you do a good deed today you will be rewarded for it in the future. You would do it anyway even if you knew you would get nothing out of it — that's the kind of person you are!

**Aquarius** Jan. 21 - Feb. 19  
What's coming into your life may seem like something you haven't earned but that's the wrong way to look at it. If you're being favoured it's because you have done something in the past that has helped others.

**Pisces** Feb. 20 - March 20  
Flattery will take you a long way, but hard work will take you further. Cosmic activity in and around the career area of your chart makes it easy to impress with ideas and enthusiasm.

# CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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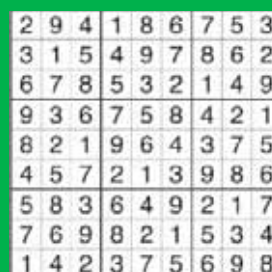
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